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Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: special economic assistance to individual countries or regions

Emergency humanitarian assistance to Ethiopia

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

Ethiopia ranks among the poorest countries in the world with high population growth, limited land availability, poor land management practices, fractured road infrastructure and low industrial employment levels. When combined with natural factors, especially cyclical periods of drought and regular onsets of heavy rain, those features are major impediments to developmental growth. In addition, continued internal conflicts hamper security, particularly in the Somali region, and hence also humanitarian interventions.

In Ethiopia, the number of people defined as chronically food insecure is growing every year, despite high levels of emergency assistance, as a result of inadequate development assistance over the last decade. Consequently, a new approach is required to separate chronic and acute food insecurity, and immediate and substantial action is needed to prevent the further deterioration and unavoidable deaths of people who are already in critical nutritional condition. Special emphasis should be placed on improving nutritional capacity to meet emerging needs, emergency water activities and vaccination campaigns. Moreover, substantial relief supplies will continue to be necessary to ensure the rehabilitation of the affected areas and population segments, with the aim of eventually focusing attention on medium- and long-term goals related to recovery and greater food security.

* A/58/150.
** The submission of the report was delayed because of extended consultations with the field.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 57/149 of 16 December 2002, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report at its fifty-eighth session on the implementation of the resolution. The report reviews the current situation in Ethiopia in relation to the ongoing humanitarian crisis, taking into consideration the assistance provided by the United Nations and its partners.

II. Socio-economic situation

A. Political and security situation

2. A significant development in the political situation in Ethiopia is the administrative restructuring process, which involves a redefinition of administrative boundaries within regions. Most of the changes cut existing constituencies into smaller ones and thereby have the potential of reducing tensions by recognizing the needs and demands of smaller ethnic groups and communities. The forthcoming national population census, due to be undertaken in 2004, may create some political tension, particularly along already disputed administrative boundaries, which could change based on the census results.

3. Former conflicts with neighbouring Somalia and Eritrea still affect the security situation in Ethiopia. Some regions, such as Somali, Afar and Gambella, remain very volatile. For instance, in the Gambella region daily tribal clashes between Anuak and Nuer/Dinka tribes erupt sporadically. Clashes started in Fugnido refugee camp in early 2002 and became so violent and regular that relocation of more than 24,000 Nuer refugees became necessary. Relocation to a safer site is currently under way. Furthermore, since January 2003, fighting has extended and has started to include people from the highlands living in Gambella and Fugnido towns.

4. In the Afar region, the Issa, Afar and Oromo tribal disputes over natural resources, such as access to pasture, water, and cattle, resumed in April 2002 and have been a problem ever since, disrupting traffic on the import road from Djibouti to Addis Ababa. Other security concerns include explosive devices, armed groups and smuggling. During the last three months several explosive devices were placed on trains operating on the railway line between Djibouti and Addis Ababa. Three such devices exploded on trains in Ethiopia near the Djibouti border. Certain sections of the main import road between Djibouti port and Addis Ababa remain unsafe despite the presence of the security forces.

5. The border of the Somali region with the former Somalia, now Somaliland, Puntland and Somalia, is difficult to control and hence easily crossed by opposition groups, armed groups and smugglers transporting and trading electronic goods and weapons. Recently, the Government of Ethiopia has been strictly enforcing measures to control cross-border smuggling activities. Despite patrols and numerous checkpoints set up by the Ethiopian police and customs authorities to reduce and control contraband, many people still take the risk of smuggling goods across the border, owing to a lack of alternative income opportunities. The major opposition armed groups operating in the Somali and Oromiya regions are the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), Al-Itahad and the

Islamic Front for the liberation of Oromiya (IFLO). Owing to the former war with Somalia, an unknown number of landmines and unexploded ordnances remain hidden in the soil, posing a threat to travellers and pastoralists in the Somali region. The latest security incidents reported from Tigray region were landmine explosions in border locations with Eritrea, notably in Zalambesa and between Inda Selase and Shararo.

6. Since the signing in Algiers in 2000 of the Peace Agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia (A/55/686-S/2000/1183) to permanently terminate military hostilities, a neutral Boundary Commission has been established to delimit and demarcate the colonial treaty border. The United Nations Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) established a Temporary Security Zone within Eritrean territory, provided more than four thousand peacekeeping forces to patrol the buffer zone and was successful in preventing any subsequent major incidents. The international Boundary Commission defined a new border between the two countries in April 2002, but final acceptance of major parts of the Boundary Commission's decision is still lacking, particularly concerning the settlement of Badme. Despite these security concerns, the political situation in Ethiopia is considered generally stable and calm.

B. Humanitarian situation

7. On 7 December, the Government of Ethiopia together with the United Nations published a joint emergency appeal for 2003[1] that identified 11.3 million people in need of 1.4 million tons of food and an additional 3 million people at risk. In March and April, rapid joint multi-agency assessments were conducted countrywide to determine adjustments in current beneficiary numbers and to identify areas where assistance requirements were particularly acute. According to the assessment results, an additional 1.2 million people would require immediate food aid until the end of the year, bringing the total to 12.6 million people in need of assistance and of an additional 79,122 tons of food. The new assessments were necessary as a result of the deteriorating nutritional status in many of the worst-affected areas as well as other related factors, such as increasing social disruption, school dropouts, distress migration and the dilution of food aid rations. Additional beneficiaries were highest in Oromiya (710,650) and the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples region (SNNP) (324,600), followed by Tigray (180,027) and Amhara (11,800). From March to May, the humanitarian community witnessed a dramatic humanitarian deterioration in nutritional status in many parts of southern Ethiopia, particularly in the SNNP region, where a number of factors led to increased suffering. The general situation in many districts in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples region was critical despite ongoing relief food distribution by the Government and non-governmental organizations, owing in part to an increase in the number of people in need, who were forced to share their food.

8. The Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples region is not the only area in the country that is suffering from high malnutrition levels. A total of 90 nutritional surveys were conducted in 2002 and 2003, which provided a more detailed assessment of the areas of concern. The surveys highlighted the need for rapid interventions in the most seriously affected areas, such as East and West Hararghe, where migrants remain in camps and individual families in Bale zone.

9. The surveys indicated severe malnutrition among children in several areas of the country, including districts in Afar, Tigray and the SNNP region. In other areas that were severely affected in September 2002, the surveys reported some improvements, which may be attributed to accelerated relief distributions. Similar surveys also indicated the emergence of new areas of concern, particularly the Fik zone of Somali region where the global acute malnutrition rate reached an alarming 33.9 per cent in April.

10. In order to strengthen the capacity to handle the nutritional emergencies in the country, procurement of therapeutic food has been stepped up. Therapeutic feeding interventions by non-governmental organizations and government units working with United Nations support have recently expanded considerably to a total of 48 therapeutic feeding centres since the beginning of June. Training in the management of therapeutic and supplementary feeding for health professionals from drought-affected regions, non-governmental organizations, partner agencies and universities has also been initiated. Efforts are being made to update nutritional surveys periodically, but this is difficult owing to the wide geographic area to be covered.

11. Another response to the deteriorating nutrition levels in the country is the increase in general food rations from 12.5 kilograms (kg) to 15 kg per person per month in the SNNP and other regions for the worst affected *woredas*, that is, priority areas where the global acute malnutrition rate is equal to or greater than 15 per cent. That measure, while helpful, needs to be complemented by better targeting and provision of supplementary foods for the most severely affected. Its implementation should also be expanded to all entitled localities.

12. Food-aid targeting remains an important way of averting malnutrition in several areas. Many districts still face a problem with dilution of food rations owing to poor targeting and the sharing of supplementary food among all family members regardless of need, despite the provision of guidelines to the Government and non-governmental organizations. The World Food Programme (WFP) and the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) have been discussing ways of improving the food aid delivery system and making deliveries more effective for the needy. The Commission has requested that the food-monitoring system in the SNNP region be strengthened by means of monitoring teams and training in food-aid targeting. The United Nations plans to strengthen its presence by deploying more qualified staff to support regional and *woreda* structures in the SNNP and other drought-affected regions.

13. The overall food aid pledge situation remains very good, with 89 per cent of the needs for the year (as assessed in November 2002) covered by 10 June 2003. However, a substantial tonnage (over 190,000 tons) remains to be resourced for requirements until the end of the year. As supplementary food needs have exceeded available stocks, it has been necessary to target the areas of greatest need. Those have included emerging critical areas where nutritional conditions are deteriorating.

14. It is hoped that recent rains will reduce the need for water tankering in some of the drought-affected areas. Sufficient rainfall would allow water and sanitation operations to be directed to longer-term solutions. In May, rains in the southern highlands of Ethiopia brought excess water to the main river in the Somali region, the Wabe Shebelle. Flooding was needed in the area for flood recession agriculture, but there was an immediate negative impact causing population displacement,

submersion of low-lying fields, increased health hazards and difficult access to those in need of humanitarian assistance.

15. For many farmers in southern Ethiopia, agricultural assistance for long-cycle crops arrived too late for them to benefit fully from the long rains. Even though some districts managed to use some of the money left over from the previous year's budget to purchase seeds, there was a general and acute lack of access to seeds in many districts in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples and other regions. Country-wide, only half of the listed beneficiary households had received seeds by the end of May 2003. Hence, the ongoing seed distributions were insufficient without additional and urgent seed assistance from donors. Furthermore, in some areas with a shortage of local seeds, seed varieties may have been partly inadequate in terms of adaptability since seeds were obtained from sources outside the user areas.

16. An unfortunate crisis projection is that both the ongoing voluntary resettlement programme and the largely insufficient seed distribution of partly inadequate seed varieties are likely to significantly disrupt the forthcoming agricultural seasons and, hence, national food production, despite predicted good rains both for the short *belg* and the long *meher* planting seasons.

17. The current rains in many parts of the country, combined with an already weakened population, are creating an environment conducive to the spread of infectious diseases, including water-borne diseases and malaria. Measles outbreaks have also been reported in the Somali region and the SNNP region. The inter-agency coordinating committee has finalized plans for measles and vitamin A campaigns in drought-affected areas, targeting some 16.2 million children under 15 years of age. The campaigns are scheduled to be completed in 2003 and early 2004.

18. United Nations staff have been deployed to the field within regional government structures to support their government counterparts and non-governmental organization partners in the effective implementation and monitoring of emergency programmes. Six regions with the most affected populations have been selected for special attention.

C. Economic situation

19. Ethiopia is one of the world's poorest countries, ranked by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) near the bottom of the human development index.[2] The country is subject to drastic weather patterns, with cyclical periods of drought and regular onsets of heavy rain. Certain areas and large population segments of Ethiopia are immediately affected by more severe poverty as soon as harvests are endangered by inadequate rainfall patterns. The country is also periodically subject to pest infestations and seasonal peaks of communicable diseases. The combination of natural factors with high population growth, limited land availability, poor land management practices, fractured road infrastructure and low industrial employment levels presents major impediments to development. The sombre reality of the inadequacies is reflected in key human development indicators, such as access to education, basic health care, sanitation and clean water.

20. Furthermore, the past border conflict with neighbouring Eritrea and lingering internal localized conflicts in different parts of the country are having an overall

negative effect on economic and development efforts. The net result is a perpetually high level of vulnerability characterized by high infant mortality and low life expectancy rates among a significant portion of the Ethiopian population.[3]

III. United Nations assistance in Ethiopia

21. The United Nations country team approach in Ethiopia permits joint humanitarian action that is coordinated and managed through the United Nations disaster management team, a committee comprising the heads of operational agencies and emergency staff and chaired by the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs-Ethiopia functions as the secretariat for the team, facilitates coordination among United Nations agencies, helps to prepare the joint emergency appeal and ensures follow-up to decisions or recommendations, including providing a linkage between the team and government, donor and non-governmental organization counterparts.

A. Food assistance

22. The World Food Programme is appealing for resources to cover the food needs of 4.6 million beneficiaries out of a total of over 12 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. As in previous years, WFP will cover part of the total relief requirements, with the remainder to be met by bilateral donations to the Government or to non-governmental organizations. WFP aims to cover 40 per cent of overall requirements for cereals and part of the needs for supplementary food for 2003. The Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission is the WFP implementing partner. Typically, beneficiaries receive food rations for between 5 and 10 months, averaging 7 months in total. The planning period covers the time until the next main harvest in November-December 2003 and makes provision for the expected needs in the first quarter of 2004.

23. Confirmed contributions in response to WFP needs for 2003 as of 5 June 2003 totalled 429,000 tons (368,000 tons cereals, 57,000 tons blended food and 4,000 tons vegetable oil). However, there are contributions under negotiation for a further 107,000 tons. When those are confirmed, 85 per cent of WFP emergency requirements will have been covered for the year. At the national level, pledges confirmed and unconfirmed to non-governmental organizations, WFP and the Government currently stand at 1.35 million tons towards total needs of 1.54 million tons, or 87 per cent. Requirements have recently been adjusted to reflect an increase in needs, supplying 79,122 tons to an additional 1.2 million beneficiaries. The ration in practice had been 12.5 kg of cereals and was only recently increased to 15 kg per person per month for the worst-affected areas. Supplementary monthly rations of 4.5 kg of protein-rich blended food and 0.75 kg of vegetable oil are targeted rations to children under five, pregnant women and nursing mothers. Blended food availability has met only about half the requirements for the first five months of the year. However, the availability will be greater for the second half of the year, and most people targeted for supplementary food can be reached from July onwards. Altogether, almost 70 per cent of the supplementary food aid needs are covered for 2003. However, local production capacity cannot keep up with current demands by the World Food Programme, non-governmental organizations and the Government

for local procurement of blended food at the present time. Most of the blended food is being procured out-of-country, much of it in the form of in-kind contributions.

24. Certain areas of the country become inaccessible between July and September at the height of the main rainy season. Thus, there is the need to pre-position relief food for certain districts during May and June for the requirements between July and September. Around 70,000 tons of food are needed for that effort.

25. An encouraging shipping performance has been reported, with WFP and other relief agencies being able to offload and transport 114,000 tons of relief food from Djibouti port into Ethiopia in January; 74,000 tons in February; 117,000 tons in March; 157,000 tons in April; and an expected 183,000 tons in May.

B. Health and nutrition

26. Health conditions in drought-affected areas of Ethiopia are very serious, compounded by an anticipated seasonal and unpredictable increase in malnutrition. Therapeutic feeding and follow-up supplementary feeding will play a key role in controlling the situation. About 60,000 to 80,000 children are estimated to be severely malnourished in the country, over 2 per cent of the 3 million children under the age of five in drought-affected areas. One metric ton of therapeutic food helps around 80 children to recuperate. Therefore, 750 tons of therapeutic food are required without considering relapses. Relapse rates are expected to be high if there is no targeted supplementary feeding programme to which the child may be referred upon discharge. Therapeutic feeding interventions by non-governmental organizations and the Government, with the support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), have expanded considerably in the last few weeks to face the increasing load of malnourished children in several regions. A total of 26 therapeutic feeding centres were operational by the end of May, and 22 more opened in June with support from UNICEF. The centres are located in the Somali, SNNP, Oromiya, Afar, Amhara and Harar regions. Five additional centres were opened by non-governmental organizations. Complementing the therapeutic food procured in 2002, UNICEF procured 70.25 tons of F-75 milk, 473 tons of F-100 milk, 156.5 tons of BP-100 biscuits, 53 tons of high-energy food ("plumpy nut") and 61,490 bags of Resomal, a rehydration solution.

27. Despite the generous donor response, relief food distributions have not been able to maintain a satisfactory nutritional level. The reasons include the following: (a) below-standard food rations of 12.5 kg instead of 15 kg per person per month; (b) poor quality of rations (often cereals only, with no or little complementary food such as pulses and oil); (c) problems with targeting priority areas and beneficiaries; (d) logistic difficulties (many areas cannot be easily reached, and rains make it even more difficult); (e) traditional food sharing (in many communities, available food is shared among all in the clan, thus diluting the impact of food aid upon the actual needy members); (f) delayed shipment; (g) borrowing from other sources; (h) difficulties in compiling correct beneficiary lists; (i) inefficiency in the distribution chain; and (j) only 50 per cent of supplementary food requirements met. Plans are to increase United Nations and non-governmental organization staff, in the SNNP region in particular, to enhance response, reporting and monitoring.

28. Besides malnutrition, measles is one of the major current threats to the population in Ethiopia, mostly to children, and its spread is exacerbated by drought

conditions. The goal of the global measles campaign for 2003, implemented by the Ministry of Health with various partners, including the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organization (WHO), is to reduce measles cases and measles deaths by 90 per cent as compared with 2002. Plans are to vaccinate at least 90 per cent of children between the ages of 6 months and 14 years in 2003 and 2004, and to provide vitamin A supplements during measles immunization. The target population in 2003 is around 17.4 million children, in addition to the 2.3 million children targeted in December 2002 in Afar and in East and West Hararghe. The first measles and vitamin A campaign in 2003, co-sponsored by UNICEF and WHO, began in March in the Bale zone of Oromiya region, in the Shinille zone of the Somali region, and in the Gurage and Silti zones in the SNNP region, targeting 1.9 million children. The second round in June targeted 5.4 million children in North and South Wollo, Wag Hamra, Arsi, Wolayta, Sidama and Fik zones. It was to be followed by a third round in July covering Hadiya, Jijiga and Gode zones, targeting an additional 913,508 children. A final campaign will cover 9.2 million more children.

29. Malaria affects 4 to 5 million people annually in Ethiopia and is prevalent in 75 per cent of the country, putting over 40 million people at risk. It represents the largest single cause of morbidity. Southern Ethiopia is particularly prone to malaria epidemics. As the rains are now ongoing in the southern parts of the country, physically weak and malnourished people are at high risk for malaria. For example, in Omo Shelenko *woreda* and Kambata zone of the SNNP region, following a malaria outbreak in April, 33 people died as a result of such factors as physical weakness from food shortages and unavailability of malaria drugs and other protection. So far, the malaria programme has distributed funds to the zones for social mobilization and is producing information, education and communication materials. In the past, some 22,000 mosquito nets were sent to the SNNP region, of which 14,000 were distributed to the target *woredas*, while 8,000 are still in the Regional Health Bureau stores. In addition to the initial emergency supply of 253,000 treated mosquito nets, UNICEF has started to procure a new stock of 68,000 insecticide-treated nets and malaria kits for malaria-prone *woredas*, with more to arrive once the 2003-2004 plans of action are finalized.

30. In response to the drought situation in Ethiopia, WHO provided 160 emergency health kits to the Ministry of Health. Early in 2003, UNICEF provided about 150 emergency health kits to various regions, and 647 more kits are being procured. The provided kits benefit a population of 560,000 people for over three months. Increased monitoring and supervision activities will ensure that relief supplies are distributed to the areas and people most in need. In addition, WHO will assist in the water sector, particularly with regard to water quality.

C. HIV/AIDS prevention

31. One of the major lessons learned about the human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) pandemic is that it spreads fastest in conditions of social instability, conflict, poverty and powerlessness, conditions that generally prevail among populations in a critical emergency situation. In drought situations, populations can become mobile or displaced and are at a higher risk of encountering HIV/AIDS, and they also fuel the problem in host communities.

32. UNICEF is working to ensure that HIV/AIDS education is provided as part of its overall emergency response to the drought. UNICEF is planning to deploy two consultants in the drought-affected areas, in addition to one who is already in the Somali region.

33. With UNICEF support, Save the Children (UK) is working in five drought-affected *woredas* in Oromiya, Amhara and Somali regions to integrate HIV/AIDS awareness with other emergency activities. To date, outreach awareness-raising activities, such as dramatic presentations, have been carried out in three Save the Children (UK) food distribution sites in South Wollo. Training in HIV/AIDS prevention was conducted for food ration providers and anti-AIDS clubs in Shinille and Jijiga zones, Somali region. In collaboration with the Ethiopian Evangelical Church, UNICEF will offer training in HIV/AIDS education for staff of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus working in Bale camps for internally displaced persons and to personnel at the nearby health centre.

D. Water and sanitation

34. Ethiopia is among the least developed countries in the world with regard to water and sanitation coverage, with 28 per cent coverage for water and 17 per cent for sanitation countrywide. Taking into consideration that an estimated 30 to 60 per cent of the existing water schemes are not functional at times owing to over-use and lack of adequate maintenance, actual coverage is even lower.

35. In the context of the current drought crisis, UNICEF, in cooperation with the Ministry of Water Resources and Regional Water Bureaux, recently conducted an emergency water supply needs survey in the six regions most affected by the drought. The number of people in need of emergency water supplies has been revised upward from the originally estimated 2.7 million to 4.2 million. Of those, 381,942 were earmarked for emergency water tankering, including 120,979 (32 per cent) who were served by UNICEF-funded tankering from January to May. If rains continue in sufficient quantities, the need for water tankering should gradually decrease, releasing more resources for longer-term solutions. However, internally displaced persons and newly resettled populations will need tankering support, as well as many of the recently opened therapeutic feeding centres in various locations.

36. Between January and mid-May, UNICEF and its local partners completed the rehabilitation of 466 existing water schemes, most of them in Oromiya, Amhara and Tigray regions, benefiting 948,700 people. UNICEF drilled a total of 223 new wells benefiting 292,240 people who did not previously have any clean water: 15 new wells in Afar region, 4 in Somali, 56 in Oromiya, 64 in SNNP, 43 in Amhara and 41 in Tigray.

37. UNICEF emergency water supply activities have so far reached 1.3 million people, or 32 per cent of the 4.2 million currently in critical need. This is a positive step towards the 2003 UNICEF target to increase national water coverage. The water interventions are also having an impact on health status by reducing water-borne diseases and improving hygiene. Increasing national sanitation coverage, with an emphasis on community and school latrines, is another challenge, together with the training of village water and sanitation committees.

38. UNICEF, in partnership with non-governmental organizations and *woreda* authorities, is closely monitoring the water and sanitation needs of the recently resettled people in Oromiya region, as well as those of the people affected by recent floods in the Gode zone of the Somali region.

39. Following consultations between the Government at both federal and regional levels, it was agreed that the size and complex nature of the humanitarian crisis called for enhanced UNICEF support to regional counterparts. Hence, UNICEF has deployed staff within regional government structures to support both government counterparts and non-governmental organization partners. The UNICEF staff deployments are within existing government infrastructures, are temporary and are intended to guide and strengthen capacity to implement, manage and monitor emergency interventions supported by UNICEF. UNICEF deployed seconded staff to Somali, Oromiya, Tigray, Afar, Amhara and SNNP regions.

E. Agriculture and livestock

40. While the *belg* cropping season plays an essential role in early recovery for farmers, the *meher* is the main cropping season for the majority of the country. The Ministry of Agriculture, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and various non-governmental organizations and international organizations have ongoing seed distribution interventions in various parts of the country. For some farmers, however, agricultural assistance will come too late to benefit from the *belg* season. As time is running out for those farmers, quick action is critical to ensure access to *meher* crop seeds that need to be planted within the coming months. Moreover, the actual agricultural output of the year's *belg* season will not be known until assessments are carried out in November-December 2003, which will serve as a basis for planning the requirements for humanitarian intervention in 2004.

41. A concentration of seed assistance can be observed in East and West Hararghe (Oromiya), and Sidama (SNNP), which are among the areas most affected by the drought. Apart from those areas and Shinille zone in the Somali region, a serious shortfall in seed interventions remains. Major requirements and major shortfalls in terms of seeds can be found in the Tigray region (requirement 5.1 million United States dollars [$]; shortfall $3.7 million) and the Amhara region (requirement $4.4 million; shortfall $3.3 million).

42. With some exceptions, most farmers in the drought-stricken areas are having serious difficulties in meeting planting requirements for a reasonable harvest.

43. FAO distributes cereal seeds as well as vegetable seeds to households headed by women and other vulnerable groups. Total FAO seed contribution for all four major seed-deficient regions (Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya and SNNP) is 6,012.7 tons of cereals and pulses (about 21 per cent of the total of approximately 27,784.1 metric tons needed in the country) in five projects targeting a total of 262,245 households. In the SNNP region, selected farmers will receive 30 million sweet potato cuttings, in addition to the 2.5 million already distributed in Oromiya region by FAO. Other farmers will receive 1,800 kg of vegetable seeds from FAO emergency assistance, in the Tigray (9,750 households) and Oromiya (3,431 households) regions. In addition, FAO, in collaboration with Catholic Relief Services of Ethiopia, organized two "seed voucher fairs" in Kalu district, South

Wollo, in April. Some 500 pre-selected beneficiaries and suppliers of seeds came together in a market event. Beneficiaries were given coupons that they could trade for local seeds of their own preference. The fair was a pilot project. If the project is successful, FAO will apply the same approach on a larger scale. In addition, many non-governmental organizations are distributing seeds in the drought-affected areas.

44. Concerns have recently been raised about the distribution of hybrid maize seeds to farmers without the necessary fertilizer and agricultural package for best yield results. Some non-governmental organizations would like to distribute chemical fertilizers along with improved hybrids of maize, but the government policy against free use of improved farm inputs, particularly fertilizers, is preventing them from doing so. Planting maize hybrids without the proper fertilizer application will give poor yield results and, hence, a considerable production loss, even if weather conditions are favourable.

45. Owing to the drought, the natural resistance of animals has decreased. The onset of the rains usually increases the infection pressure, causing possible outbreaks of diseases and parasites. The diseases have devastating effects on the animal population and, hence, on pastoralist food security. To support the effort of the Government in minimizing loss of livestock due to diseases, FAO purchased vaccines and drugs and distributed them to drought-affected regions, including areas within the Afar, Shinille and Oromiya regions.

46. Emergency interventions in most cases focus on food aid. While helping to save the lives of pastoralists, their livelihoods are equally unprotected. Pastoralist livelihoods are based on livestock resources and when those resources are depleted due to drought, pastoralists become destitute and struggle to recover. Moreover, the food consumed by pastoralists' children is mainly composed of milk. Therefore, pastoralists and agropastoralists prefer to receive assistance that improves the milk production of their animals rather than receiving relief food. FAO, through the livestock working group, has improved the awareness of donors on that issue. As a result, unlike previous drought years, more funding has been made available for FAO to implement emergency livestock feeding in the Afar and Oromiya regions.

47. The emergency unit of FAO has organized a series of monthly working group meetings and workshops in Ethiopia to exchange information and to identify activities and gaps for an action plan. The livestock emergency unit also supported non-governmental organizations and the Ministry of Agriculture in the preparation of contingency plans and emergency project proposals.

F. Emergency education

48. The drought has had a negative effect on the ability of some families to keep their children in school. The Ministry of Education, UNICEF and their partners are targeting 200,000 pupils whose educational opportunities are critically limited. UNICEF has completed a rapid assessment of the educational and psychosocial needs of children in drought-affected areas. The preliminary findings confirm that many children are dropping out of school or not attending school regularly. Girls in particular are kept home to take care of domestic chores, as parents have to tend cattle. UNICEF and WFP will work together to expand and strengthen the school-feeding programme. In the Afar region, a UNICEF/WFP/WHO consortium is

cooperating to improve water supply, environment, sanitation, nutrition and learning opportunities in schools. The experience will then be replicated in other regions.

G. Gender and child protection

49. Drought and displacement have undermined traditional family and community cohesion. Traditional capacities and patterns of protection and care have been disrupted or destroyed, placing women and children at heightened risk of physical and psychological trauma and exploitation. Documented instances of sexual exploitation of women and children (including street children) and child labour among internally displaced persons have been noted. Wherever possible, support is being provided to facilitate delivery of essential services directly to affected communities to pre-empt displacement. In March, a workshop, supported by the United Nations, on the prevention of sexual exploitation in a humanitarian crisis was held in Addis Ababa. UNICEF also held a train-the-trainers workshop on the same topic for both Government and non-governmental organization participants from 26 to 30 May, also in Addis Ababa. It is anticipated that the training will be expanded into the affected regions and will include officials involved in food and emergency supply distribution as well as representatives from affected communities, particularly women and children. A train-the-trainers workshop was also conducted in early May on psychosocial assessment skills and interventions in Tigray, targeted at refugee communities that are still struggling to reintegrate.

H. Internally displaced people and resettlement programmes

50. The Government has been formulating its resettlement policy for over three years, as evidenced in the rural development strategy, the food security strategy and its regional programmes released in 2002. Although resettlement is seen as a technical solution to chronic food insecurity in overpopulated areas, experience so far has been overwhelmingly negative, both in social and economic terms. Resettlement areas have never become surplus producing areas and, in many cases, settlers have remained food-aid dependent. A number of social and political problems have resulted from resettlement, including competition for resources between settlers and the local population, leading to outright resource conflicts and violence. Resettlement does not provide a sustainable solution to overpopulated areas, given the imbalance between limited resettlement numbers and the continuing high population growth, in both resettlement sites and in areas from which people have been resettled. The international community and United Nations agencies have had some involvement in dialogue on resettlement. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs-Ethiopia supported a number of assessment studies on areas with resettlement potential in different regions, and UNICEF made limited funds available to assist migrants at their new settlement sites, as for example in Bale zone. The Government is in the process of translating its long-term strategic goal of resettlement into a short-term resettlement policy in all regions simultaneously, to provide better food security.

51. The United Nations is gathering as much information as possible on ongoing resettlement programmes in Ethiopia and their problems and constraints to enable United Nations agencies to formulate appropriate humanitarian interventions. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister recently invited the donor community and

United Nations representatives on a one-week mission to visit selected out-migration and resettlement sites across Ethiopia. It became clear that the Government of Ethiopia would need assistance for its resettlement programmes, as significant bottlenecks have developed in all regions where programmes have been initiated to provide relief supplies and basic infrastructure at settlement sites.

I. Humanitarian implications of the border demarcation process

52. Article 4 (16) of the December 2000 Algiers Agreement (A/55/686-S/2000/1183, annex) requested the United Nations to facilitate resolution of problems which may arise due to the transfer of territorial control, including the consequences for individuals residing in previously disputed territory. The two United Nations country teams from Ethiopia and Eritrea met for the sixth time in mid-May 2003 to discuss the humanitarian and legal implications of the demarcation process. Following the transfer of territory, returning villagers from the border areas will face important decisions relating to nationality and/or relocation. Factors that might influence their decisions include the nature of the assistance that they would receive; family connections on either side of the border; and property and asset considerations that would apply to those who move. The role of the two Governments and the United Nations country teams would ultimately be the coordination and provision of humanitarian assistance, while the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea would assist in ensuring a smooth transition from one administration to another. The UNHCR mandate on statelessness outlines some of that Office's specific roles, including providing information to raise awareness of the problem, offering solutions and training staff and government officials. Potential legal problems arising from the border demarcation between Ethiopia and Eritrea include issues of nationality, residence, real estate, livestock and personal property. The two country teams have drawn up a new action plan, which will be implemented by the two country teams and UNMEE.

53. The total number of internally displaced persons on both sides of the border has been confirmed at 130,000. However, non-internally displaced figures for those living in the border areas still need to be assessed in order for planning to take place. A humanitarian task force on the issue will calculate requirements based on the provision of a set of standard services.

J. Emergency coordination

54. At the ministerial level, the National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committee is the highest coordination body and meets to strategize on emergency response. National-level emergency coordination task forces have been established in the ministries of water resources, health, and agriculture. The Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission maintains its role as the lead Government body in the coordination of food assistance. Non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies were invited to join the task forces, with the chairs of those task forces reporting weekly to the Chairman of the crisis management committee, the Deputy Commissioner of the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission, who, in turn, reports to the National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committee. Similar crisis management committees were established at the regional level, and a technical information management exchange forum was created by the

DPPC, in which sector task forces and humanitarian response partners exchange information and identify future paths of action.

55. Through the DPPC as the focal point for the coordination of emergency response, non-governmental organizations and United Nations partners identified areas in which they can enhance their respective organizational coordination and participate more effectively and harmoniously in the government coordination mechanism. The Christian Relief and Development Association provides a forum for non-governmental organizations, while the United Nations utilizes its disaster management team, emergency officers' meetings, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (Emergencies Unit), and the World Food Programme logistics and procurement coordination meeting as forums for coordination.

56. In addition, the DPPC has established an information centre, with the support of WFP and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs-Ethiopia, and maintains dialogue with the wider humanitarian community through regular assessments of the main and minor harvest seasons and of pastoral areas. The editorial committee, comprising the DPPC, donor and United Nations representatives, serves as a sounding board for the views of the wider humanitarian community and as the forum in which funding appeals are drafted.

K. Humanitarian assistance provided

57. Support of interventions for some 12.5 million people early in 2003 was possible owing to a timely donor response to the drought. Early food aid pledges, in combination with the Emergency Food Security Reserve of Ethiopia, allowed food aid to be pre-positioned in a timely manner. The donor community also responded favourably to non-food needs. Factors that supported their timely responses included an efficient and credible government early warning system; the active involvement of donors in the assessment process from the very beginning of the drought crisis; and early advocacy by the Government, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, donor representatives and the media. A reassessment was scheduled to take place in June to update overall requirements of food and non-food needs.

L. Acute versus chronic beneficiary targeting

58. In spite of high levels of emergency assistance, the number of people defined as chronically food insecure is estimated to be approximately 6.2 million owing to an inadequate proportion of development assistance to Ethiopia over the last decade. Without appropriate interventions, Ethiopia's chronically food-insecure population is likely to increase, as the annual population growth of 2.7 per cent exceeds the average annual 2.4 per cent increase in agricultural production. Furthermore, the national figures do not reflect the fact that agricultural growth is taking place mainly in surplus production areas and not in food deficit regions. Decades of relief interventions through emergency aid have saved lives but have not been able to address the underlying causes of food insecurity. The general nutritional and economic status of the majority of vulnerable people has not improved. The needs of the chronically food-insecure population would ideally be addressed under a development umbrella rather than through emergency aid, as is the case at present. A development approach would require separating chronic and acute food

insecurity. In the long run, such a distinction is vital in order to systematically programme food aid within a development framework. As critical links between emergency humanitarian issues and chronic structural conditions are recognized, more appropriate multi-year programming and financing of aid should actively be promoted.

IV. Conclusion

59. The clearest indicator of the severity of the present crisis is the alarming rate of global acute malnutrition and severe acute malnutrition. Immediate and substantial action is needed to prevent the further deterioration and deaths of many people who are already in critical condition. Special emphasis needs to be placed on water activities owing to the increase in the number of people currently in need of emergency water assistance, which rose from 2.7 to 4.2 million. Conducting vaccination campaigns and improving nutritional capacity to meet emerging needs are also priorities.

60. The outlook for 2004 is difficult to anticipate before the *belg* assessment in November-December, but it is expected that relief needs will continue to grow. Furthermore, a robust rehabilitation strategy for pastoral and agricultural areas and a greater focus on resettlement and policy issues affecting development will be critical in alleviating the impact of future droughts.

Notes

[1] *Emergency Assistance Requirements and Implementation Options for 2003: A Joint Government-UN Appeal* (Addis Ababa, 2002).

[2] Ethiopia was ranked 171 out of 174 countries.

[3] Infant mortality is 110 per 1,000 live births; life expectancy at birth is 43.3 years (1995-2000). See United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, 2000* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2000).